15 February 1975

Dear Larry: (Finley)

There might be some crumb in the enclosed UPI story from NY which hasn't already reached you, so I send it along. The angle that the Empire State lady has got herself a lawyer and is demanding guarantees against prosecution is, one supposes, a solid development.

Pls make a mental note to let me know if you run into any hint from Janus as to where he has raised the ~~$250,000~~ $150,000 for the reward and the additional $500,000 which he says is available.

For what it's worth, I'm unable to separate this development (the sudden solidifying of the Empire State lady angle) from the latest froth from the San Clemente soap opera: Nixon's frightening the wits out of the Republicans by threatening to resume political activity on their behalf, and his allowing it to be known that he has fantasized, as Time mag put it, that he would not mind some day being ambassador in Peking. I had divined the latter some months ago from what Julie said at one point, about not letting his talents for dealing with foreigners go to waste. But as usual I hadn't anticipated the gall required for him to tell Goldwater he'd like to help the party out. This is an unmistakable threat, designed to make everyone feel that the farther they can send him the better. Even the Democrats can hardly view the 1976 campaign with calm if they think Nixon is going to be messing around in it. He knows too much.

Would Ford name Nixon ambassador to Peking ? That depends partly on whether the pardon was extended under duress, but also could be much influenced on how much GOP heat is turned on Ford to get our GL to shut up.

Would the Chinese accept Nixon ? This is the worst part. In my judgment they would. Watergate has meant nothing to them -- just another sign of capitalist degeneracy. They undoubtedly see Nixon as a perfectly natural product of such a system, and besides all us long-nosed Caucasians look alike anyway. Most of all, while they know his record as well as we do, the fact remains that he DID something about their most painful internal question -- Taiwan -- and made possible the prospect of a solution.

If he actually is sent to Peking, eventually, how better to grease the whole deal than with the long-lost bones.

Sorry to hit you with a horror story.

Best,

jdw

cc/hw